

TECHNICAL REPORT

RESTORING DIGNITY AND BUILDING RESILIENCE



MONITORING REPORT
ON UN WOMEN'S PROGRAMMING
IN ZA'ATARI REFUGEE CAMP
June-October 2015

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Restoring Dignity and Building Resilience:
Monitoring Report on UN Women's Programming
in Za'atari Refugee Camp, June–October 2015

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The UN Women Cash for Work and Empowerment programme in Za'atari refugee camp is implemented with generous contributions from the Governments of Finland, Italy and Japan.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

C4W	Cash For Work
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
JOD	Jordanian Dinar
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations Refugee Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAF	Vulnerability Assessment Framework
WFP	World Food Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Deemed “the great tragedy of this century” by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees¹, the Syria crisis is now extending into its fifth year. Since the outbreak of the conflict in 2011, more than 7.6 million Syrians have become displaced internally and over 4.1 million have fled to neighbouring countries. Of the latter, around 1.4 million are estimated to reside in Jordan², where 628,887 are registered with UNHCR³. Refugees have left their homes with very little, and they have since coped by liquidating their belongings, selling assets still in Syria (such as land), relying on humanitarian assistance and finding opportunities to earn an income, mostly through the informal economy. With their problems compounded by price inflation, scarce resources and dwindling international assistance, many refugees are increasingly turning to negative coping mechanisms – such as reducing food intake or relying on child labour – to deal with life’s demands. Further challenges include increasing social tensions between refugees and Jordan’s hosting communities, who perceive refugees as worsening existing social challenges such as unemployment and overcrowded social services.

Actors responding to the Syrian refugee crisis have acknowledged the vital importance of a shift in strategies. Instead of focusing on emergency response, building resilience among the displaced communities and in national service delivery is now prioritized. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) launched its support for Syrian refugees in Jordan in November 2012 when, in coordination with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), it opened its first centre in Za’atari refugee camp: ‘an Oasis – safe space for women and girls’. In addition to carrying out its role as a technical advisor on gender equality and women’s rights to humanitarian actors, the agency has extended its programme to three centres in Za’atari and undertaken a range of work for refugees and hosting communities throughout the north of Jordan. Within Za’atari, the centres offer a multi-sectorial programme providing cash for work (C4W), life skills, dialogue forums, leadership support and protection referral services. The most recent centre was officially opened in November 2015 in

partnership with the World Food Programme (WFP), after the completion of this monitoring.

International assistance in Jordan seeks to enable refugees to cope with the shocks of displacement and to be positioned to resume productive lives after displacement. Difficulties faced by refugees in accessing markets and livelihood opportunities result in the long-term ‘erosion human capital’, as noted by the World Bank and UNHCR⁴. UN Women is working in Za’atari camp to abate this and to build social equality, within the confines of the current operating environment. To this end UN Women provides close to 200 female-focused cash-for-work opportunities per day, serving as the largest female-focused cash-for-work provider in Jordan. Women’s work and productive assets are linked to the internal refugee camp economy, in which they produce social goods such as comprehensive maternal kits and school uniforms. These, in turn, are distributed by camp partners such as the United Nations Children’s Agency (UNICEF) to camp residents.

To ensure the Za’atari-based programming is achieving its desired impact, UN Women commissioned an

1 Sly 2013.

2 Government of Jordan 2015.

3 UNHCR 2015a.

4 Verme et al. 2016.



independent researcher to conduct a monitoring of its work in the camp. Completed in two months, the research utilized a mixed method approach to collect data from a sample of UN Women beneficiaries, predominantly female. A key focus of the monitoring was to assess the impact of UN Women's C4W programme on women's empowerment in the camp and their ability to meet their basic needs. In addition to providing insights into UN Women's programming, the monitoring sheds light on the situation of female refugees living in Za'atari – both the key issues and challenges they face and the entry points for support and empowerment.

Key findings

communicate with displaced family members and to maintain relationships at home.

The vast majority of respondents – 87 per cent – earning C4W reported not being able to save any of their income. **53 per cent of those interviewed had some paid work experience prior to arriving in Jordan. 74 per cent of women stated a preference for paid work outside the home and 18 per cent prefer to have paid work at home.**

Isolation and boredom are key challenges facing women and girls in Za'atari. Their key stressors also include weak familial and social networks, difficult living conditions and inadequate services. The provision of economic empowerment, access to public spaces and engagement with their peers is instrumental in

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